

Snapping Turtle



APPEARANCE

- Brown, olive gray, or black upper shell (carapace) 9 to 14 inches in length in adults
- Strong jaw with a hooked beak, strong claws, and a long, saw-toothed tail

STATUS

- LEGAL to take with a valid Iowa fishing license.

HABITAT

- Wherever permanent water exists, including in lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, marshes, and ditches

RANGE IN IOWA

- Statewide

FUN FACTS

- Extremely aggressive on land
- Will often try to swim away when confronted in water
- Iowa's largest turtle species
- Unlike most of Iowa's aquatic turtles, male snapping turtles grow larger than females
- Will often bury itself in the mud of shallow waters, with only its head poking out
- Hunts for food in the evening and at night
- Cannot swallow on land; must find and eat its food in the water

DIET

- Omnivorous diet of water plants and anything they can catch

